

HIGGINS ARMORY
100 Barber Avenue
Worcester
Worcester County
Massachusetts

HABS NO. MA-1236

HABS
MASS
14-WORC
4-

PHOTOGRAPHS AND
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey

National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

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4-

ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM

STATE Massachusetts	COUNTY Worcester	TOWN OR VICINITY Worcester
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) HIGGINS ARMORY		HABS NO. MA-1236
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE John Woodman Higgins Armory Museum		
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES) 100 Barber Avenue		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) 1930 (National Register inventory form)	ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE) Joseph D. Leland	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE) Built of steel frame construction for the Worcester Pressed Steel Co. (J.W. Higgins, Pres.) its believed to have been the 1st building in the U.S. constructed entirely of steel & glass. While Higgins was developing interest in the manufacture of modern steel parts (the family business), he also became interested in the past arts in metal works, suits*		
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE)		
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS) Steel frame construction with extensive use of glass.		
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE) 4 story, L-shaped building		
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE Extensive use of glass with steel framing serving as pilasters between vertical strips of windows, held with oversized rivets; foliated bands over the 1st story windows; medallions at the cornice; corner entry recessed entire height with elaborate entry with metal foliated & medallioned surrounds and pediment; top 1/2 suit of armor at roof over entry.		
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED) Interior of museum is constructed of stone and plaster forming high pointed arched vaults, based on "Prinz Eugen's" castle in Hohenwerfen, Austria (from which part of the armor collection came). Pointed arched doorways & windows, medieval style lighting fixture		
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES none		
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE Good condition; used as commercial offices and museum of armor & metal arts		
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE *of armor in particular, which he began to collect. Once the collection outgrew its space Higgins hired architect, Joseph Leland to design a combination office & museum building. When it opened 1/12/31, the lower 2 floors were office & the upper 2 the armory museum.		
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.) National Register inventory form, part of the Worcester Multi-resource district, prepared by B.R. Pfeiffer of Worcester Heritage Preservation Society, March 1978.		
COMPILER, AFFILIATION C. Lavoie, historian, HABS/HAER	DATE February 1989	

ADDENDUM TO:
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(John Woodman Higgins Armory Museum)
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
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